

IN THE CLAIMS

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS, WITH MARKINGS AND STATUS IDENTIFIERS

(Currently amended claims showing deletions by ~~strikethrough~~ or double brackets [[]]) and additions by underlining)

Listing of Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A contamination Contamination barrier for the prevention of preventing contamination of aqueous solutions in an open [[and/]]or automated system, that comprises said barrier comprising at least one water immiscible hydrocarbon or hydrocarbon mixture.
2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in of claim 1, characterised in that [[it]] said barrier is comprised of an unsubstituted hydrocarbon.
3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in of claim 1, characterised in that [[it]] said barrier is comprised of a substituted hydrocarbon.
4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in of claim 1, ~~one of claims 1 to 3~~ characterised in that [[it]] said barrier is comprised of a saturated or unsaturated cyclic hydrocarbon.
5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in ~~one of the claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, characterised in that [[it]] said barrier is comprised of a branched [[and/]]or unbranched acyclic hydrocarbon.
6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in ~~one of the claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, characterised in that the hydrocarbon [[has]] is comprised of from 5 to 20, preferably 6 bis 16, most preferably 8 bis 12 carbon atoms.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in one of the claims 1 to 6 claim 1, characterised in that this as the hydrocarbon is most preferably comprised of a branched or unbranched alkane with preferably 8 to 12 carbon atoms.
8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in claim 7 characterised in that this as said alkane is preferably selected from the group consisting of octane, nonane, decane and [[/or]] decane as well as dodecane and mixtures thereof.
9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The contamination Contamination barrier as described in one of the claims 1 to 8 claim 1, characterised in that this as the hydrocarbon mixture is comprised of mineral oil.
10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method Method for the prevention of preventing contamination characterised in that during the processing of aqueous solutions in open [[and/]] or automated systems they are covered comprising covering said aqueous solutions with at least one water immiscible hydrocarbon or hydrocarbon mixture.
11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of Method as described in claim 10 characterised in that said hydrocarbon is an unsubstituted hydrocarbon is used for covering.
12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of Method as described in claim 10 characterised in that said hydrocarbon is a substituted hydrocarbon is used for covering.
13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method Method according to one of the claims 10 to 12 claim 10 characterised in that said hydrocarbon is a saturated or unsaturated cyclic hydrocarbon is used.
14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method Method according to one of the claims 10 to 12 claim 10 characterised in that said hydrocarbon is a branched or unbranched acyclic hydrocarbon is used.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method ~~Method according to one of the claims 10 to 14~~
~~claim 10 characterised in that [[a]] said hydrocarbon [[with]] is comprised of from 5 to 20, preferably 6 to 16, most preferably 8 to 12 carbon atoms is used.~~
16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method ~~Method according to one of the claims 10 to 15~~
~~claim 10 characterised in that [[as]] said hydrocarbon most preferably is a branched or unbranched alkane with preferably 8 to 12 carbon atoms is used.~~
17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of ~~Method according to~~ claim 16 characterised in that [[as]] said alkane preferably is selected from the group consisting of octane, nonane, decane and[[/or]] dodecane as well as and mixtures thereof are preferably used.
18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method ~~Method according to one of the claims 10 to 17~~
~~claim 10 characterised in that [[as]] said hydrocarbon mixture[[,]] is comprised of mineral oil is used.~~
19. (NEW) The contamination barrier of claim 1 characterized in that the hydrocarbon is comprised of from 6 to 16 carbon atoms.
- 20 (NEW) The contamination barrier of claim 1 characterized in that the hydrocarbon is comprised of from 8 to 12 carbon atoms.
21. (NEW) The contamination barrier of claim 7 characterized in that said branched or unbranched alkane is from 8 to 12 carbon atoms.
22. (NEW) The method of claim 10 characterized in that said hydrocarbon is comprised of from 6 to 16 carbon atoms.
23. (NEW) The method of claim 10 characterized in that said hydrocarbon is comprised of from 8 to 12 carbon atoms.
24. (NEW) The method of claim 16 characterized in that said branched or unbranched alkane is comprised of from 8 to 12 carbon atoms.